

Recycling Just Got Easier!

Single-Stream Recycling Comes to Morgan Hill

Morgan Hill has begun single-stream recycling. All of your recyclables will now go into the same brown recycling cart. Studies have shown that the convenience of single-stream recycling leads to greater participation and increased recycling volumes, which helps reduce the amount of materials going to our landfills. Effective immediately, all of your recyclables can go together in your brown, wheeled cart. As of January 31st, we will no longer be using the small, open-topped bins for recycling. You may keep these and reuse them for whatever you like or, if you'd like them collected, simply leave them at the curb on your regular collection day. Need another cart? Call 842-3358.



"Green" New Year's Resolutions

The start of a new year gives us an opportunity to reflect on the past and resolve to make a fresh start. Year after year, our New Year's resolutions have a familiar ring to them - eat right, exercise more, lose weight. This year, why not shake things up and resolve to live a "greener" life? Here are five simple green resolutions to consider:

1) Kill the energy wasting "Phantom". Phantom load is a term that refers to the energy wasted by electronics and power chargers when they are plugged in, but not in use. Your computer cord, cell phone charger, and time-telling DVD player are all sucking energy from the outlet even when there isn't anything attached or being used. Plug electronics into a power strip and flip the switch to off when you're not watching, listening, or charging.

2) Kick the plastic water bottle habit. Last year, Americans consumed about 50 billion plastic water bottles. If the fact that

plastic is bad for the environment doesn't get you to quit, knowing that several bottled water brands use the same water that's available from your faucet might. Resolve to buy a reusable bottle and refill it throughout the day.

3) Bring your own bags to the grocery store. Plastic bags are made from fossil fuels and only about 1 percent of them are recycled each year. Most end up in landfills (where they take perhaps 1000 years to decompose) or in the sea.



4) Get out of the car. Ride your bike, walk, take the bus or carpool just one day a week. Using the car one less day each week to get to work or run errands can improve your health, reduce your household expenses and reduce greenhouse gas emissions by removing cars from the road. If you don't live near public transportation, try organizing a once-a-week carpool with your neighbors or coworkers.

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Save money, help sustain future generations and meet new friends. Take this free class and learn how climate change is impacting Morgan Hill and what you can do to help reduce these impacts. You will receive tools such as a workbook to track your progress, a reusable shopping bag, a shower timer, and much more. After completing the course (three classes), you will become eligible to receive a free home energy analysis (valued at \$300). Bring your family members and work together to reduce your household emissions. Classes are held at the Centennial Recreation Center. Free childcare is available for CRC members; \$4 for non-members.

Upcoming class dates/times are:
Saturdays, 1/9-1/23
from 10-11am;
Tuesdays, 1/12-1/26
from 6:30-7:30pm and
Thursdays, 1/14-1/28
from 6:30-7:30pm.

5) Lose weight the “green” way.

Many classic weight loss tips—eat fresh vegetables, skip the processed food aisle, cut out red meat—line up perfectly with a green lifestyle. High calorie foods generally take a lot of energy to produce and package. Consider your food’s carbon footprint. Think of how many miles it has traveled, how many chemicals were used to produce it and how much pollution, waste and packaging were generated in its production. Trade one meat-based meal each week for a vegetarian option and support local agriculture by shopping at the farmers market.

The most popular advice for keeping resolutions is to keep them simple: look at small changes you can make and don't make too many—choose one or two goals and focus on those. No matter what your lifestyle is like, there are enough green resolutions out there for you to choose the one that works for you.



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Make Your Home Less Toxic

We may not think of it, but every day the average American is exposed to toxic chemicals that contribute to illnesses like allergies and asthma. Many common household items can replace toxics in your home. Try some of these alternative uses for common products and reduce your family’s exposure to toxins while reducing your impact on the planet. **Vanilla extract** usually has a high alcohol content and can be used for removing sticker residue. A mix of 1 part **salt** to 3 parts boiling water can be poured directly onto weeds to kill them. For oil and egg spills, cover the area with **salt** – it will make the spill a lot easier to pick up. To give your dishwasher a good clean, run it through a cycle and use **baking soda** instead of detergent. Remove paint from hair or skin by dabbing a cotton ball dipped in **olive oil** to the affected area. Apply a little **olive oil** to your shoes to restore their shine.

This Month’s Green Living Tip:

Warm Yourself, Not the Planet

Is the chilly winter weather tempting you to crank up your heater? Don’t do it! Three to five percent more energy is used for each degree the furnace is set above 68 degrees. Lower your thermostat and use these tips to save money and warm yourself, not the planet! Dress in layers. You may not have to wear an outer coat to stay warm inside, but wearing an extra layer of wool or fleece will keep you toasty. Open curtains and blinds during the day



to let the sun in and close them at night to keep out the cold. Don’t run the bathroom fan after you shower; the humidity will make the house feel warmer. Give up the cold carbonated drinks in favor of teas, soups and warm drinks. Eat spicy foods. It is known that foods seasoned with cayenne and chili peppers help to raise the body temperature and warm you up.